

Message Text

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ACTION AF-04

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C O N F I D E N T I A L KINSHASA 8671

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS PGOV CG US

SUBJECT: PROPOSED MESSAGE FOR MOBUTU

REF: BUJUMBURA 1076

1. I WAS PLEASED THAT MOBUTU ONCE AGAIN RESPONDED POSITIVIEL TO OUR REQUEST THAT HE WEIGH IN WITH AMIN (REFTEL). I AM NOT SURPRISED, HOWEVER, BY FOREIGN MINISTER UMBA'S UNHAPPINESS WITH OUR DEMARCHE, WHICH OBVIOUSLY REFLECTS MOBUTU'S CURRENT MOOD. THERE IS A MESSAGE IN THIS REACTION WHICH DESERVES ATTENTION AND, I BELIEVE, ACTION ON OUR PART IF WE WANT MOBUTU'S CONTINUED COOPERATION ON ISSUES OF COMMON CONCERN.

2. AS THE DEPARTMENT IS AWARE, WE HAVE REPEATEDLY SOUGHT MOBUTU'S HELP-- USUALLY ON AN URGENT BASIS -- IN DEALING WITH AMIN. JUST AS REPEATEDLY, WE HAVE TURNED DOWN MOBUTU'S REQUESTS THAT WE GIVE HIM SOMETHING IN RETURN TO SHOW AMIN THAT HE CAN DELIVER THE GOODS IN THE OTHER DIRECTION AS WELL. WHILE OBVIOUSLY THERE IS LITTLE WE CAN OR SHOULD DO IN RESPONDING TO AMIN'S PROPOSED QUID PRO QUOS, WE CANNOT EXPECT MOBUTU TO GO ON DOING OUR BIDDING WITH AMIN WITHOUT SOME RECIPROCAL GESTURES ON OUR PART.

3. MORE SIGNIFICANT AND REVEALING WAS UMBA'S REFERENCE TO MOBUTU'S
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PUBLIC SUPPORT OF OUR INITIATIVE ON ZIMBABWE AND, IN THE NEXT BREATH, HIS COMPLAINT THAT WE NO LONGER SEEM INTERESTED IN DEALING WITH ZAIRE ON IMPORTANT MATTERS AND PREFER TO WORK WITH OTHERS SUCH AS NYERERE. THIS CERTAINLY REFLECTS MOBUTU'S SENSITIVITY TO THE FACT THAT, IN CONTRAST TO PAST PRACTICE, WE ARE NO LONGER MAKING ANY EFFORT TO CONSULT WITH HIM OR SEEK HIS SUPPORT ON SOUTHERN AFRICAN ISSUES. THE LARGER INFERENCE HE DRAWS FROM

THIS AND A SERIES OF OTHER PERCEIVED REBUFFS FROM US, STARTING WITH SHABA, IS OBVIOUS.

4. AS I HAVE ALREADY MADE CLEAR TO THE DEPARTMENT, I FAVOR A MEASURED SHIFT IN OUR POSTURE TOWARD MOBUTU IN THE DIRECTION OF MORE CLOSELY RELATING OUR SUPPORT AND COOPERATION TO HIS OWN PERFORMANCE. IN THIS CONTEXT I AM SATISFIED THAT OUR PRESENT POLICIES ARE GENERALLY ON TARGET. BUT, AS I HAVE ALSO SAID BEFORE, WE SHOULD EXERCISE CARE SO THAT IN PURSUING THIS COURSE WE DO NOT UNNECESSARILY TRIGGER REACTION WHICH COULD SERVE TO HARM OUR CONSIDERABLE INTERESTS HERE. BEING SEEN AS A MAJOR PLAYER IN AFRICA IS IMPORTANT TO MOBUTU. IF WE DELIBERATELY EXCLUDE HIM FROM OUR COUNSELS, WE MUST BE PREPARED TO RISK SACRIFICING SOME OF THE LONG-STANDING COOPERATION WE HAVE ENJOYED FROM ZAIRE IN OTHER AREAS, BE IT SUPPORT IN THE UN OR PROTECTING AMERICANS IN UGANDA. IN THIS CONNECTION, I BELIEVE RECENT WARNING SIGNALS RE MOBUTU'S MOOD WARRANT OUR CONSIDERING WAYS OF PUTTING MORE BALANCE INTO OUR CURRENT DEALINGS WITH HIM.

5. SPECIFICALLY, I RECOMMEND THAT WE BE INSTRUCTED TO CONVEY A MESSAGE FOR MOBUTU, PREFERABLY FROM THE SECRETARY, WHICH INCLUDES THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

- WE WERE PLEASED BY MOBUTU'S PROMPT, PUBLIC SUPPORT OF OUR PROPOSALS FOR A ZIMBABWE SETTLEMENT;
 - WE APPRECIATE ALSO MOBUTU'S INTERVENING WITH AMIN ON
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HUMANITARIAN GROUNDS, AND RECOGNIZE THE DIFFICULTIES POSED FOR HIM BY THIS AND OTHER INTERVENTIONS HE HAS MADE ON OUR BEHALF;

- WE VALUE ZAIRE'S CONTINUED COOPERATION AND WISH TO STAY IN CLOSE TOUCH ON ISSUES OF COMMON CONCERN;
- SECRETARY VANCE LOOKS FORWARD TO MEETING WITH FOREIGN MINISTER UMBA DDI LUTETE IN NEW YORK AND PROPOSES A MEETING ON (SPECIFIC DATE).

6. WHILE IN VIEW OF OUR DEMARCHES IT MIGHT ALSO BE APPROPRIATE TO EXPRESS SATISFACTION WITH PROMPT, OPEN TRIAL FOR NGUZA AND HUMANITARIAN TREATMENT APPARENTLY ACCORDED HIM, BELIEVE IT PREFERABLE TO AWAIT OUTCOME OF CURRENT TRIAL AND INCORPORATE ANY REMARKS ON THIS SUBJECT IN SECRETARY VANCE'S BILATERAL WITH UMBA.

7. WE UNDERSTAND MOBUTU NOW PLANS TO LEAVE ZAIRE SEPTEMBER 15 FOR EXTENDED TRIP ABROAD. IF THE DEPARTMENT CONCURS IN DESIRABILITY OF CONVEYING MESSAGE TO HIM ALONG ABOVE LINES, REQUEST INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE THAT DATE.

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